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Maastricht

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Cai Guo-Qiang: My Stories of Painting

September 29 2016: Exhibition Opening and Presentation of the Bonnefanten Award 2016 to Cai Guo-Qiang

Maastricht 08.09.2016 – On 29 September, the Bonnefanten Award for Contemporary Art 2016 (BACA) will be presented to Cai Guo-Qiang (1957, Quanzhou, Fujian, China). The BACA is the most important award for international visual art in the Netherlands, and will be presented for the ninth time this year. Consisting of a sum of 50,000 Euros, a publication and a solo exhibition, the Award is a tribute to a living non-Western artist with an exceptional oeuvre and demonstrable influence on other artists, exhibition makers and art professionals. Together with the artist, the Bonnefantenmuseum is presenting the first solo exhibition of Cai Guo-Qiang in The Netherlands: My Stories of Painting (30.09.2016 - 01.05.2017)

Cai Guo-Qiang: My Stories of Painting

My Stories of Painting is the first exhibition that will focus on Cai's long journey of painting in terms of two parallel paths. The first traces his decades of restless exploration in painting, presenting over a hundred works from different periods, of varying scale, and across various mediums — many of which are shown for the first time. The trajectory begins with his time in China: watercolours and oil paintings, assignments from his student days, experimental paintings, and oil paintings with gunpowder; followed by his time in Japan: paintings created purely with gunpowder, and gunpowder drawings for explosion events; it then moves on to his time in New York and the vast global stage — paintings reflecting his unique challenge to the issue of painting through his consistent artistic methodology, including recent pieces following his return to creating independent gunpowder paintings in the past few years. Evolving from black gunpowder to color gunpowder, this new stage registers the artist's unrestrained pursuit of his childhood dream to become a painter, as well as his confrontation with the integral challenges of contemporary painting.

The second path is that of his family: his grandmother, parents, wife, and daughters. Through their paintings, photography, and other works, be it professional or amateur, realist or amorphous, viewers can see how generation after generation, the artist's family accompanies and mutually influences Cai. They will be able to appreciate the exhibition's scholarly consideration of the artist's paintings, in addition to experiencing the tender and intimate as well as bitter and arduous sides of a painter's journey. Crossing the boundaries between different cultures, the exhibition will resonate widely with audiences, and will be an important milestone in Cai's decades-long exploration of painting.

About the artist Cai Guo-Qiang

Cai Guo-Qiang was born in Quanzhou City, China in 1957. He now lives and works in New York. Cai has worked in multiple mediums within art, including drawing, installation, video and performance art. Drawing upon Eastern philosophy and contemporary social issues as a conceptual basis, these site-specific projects and events interpret and respond to local culture and history. His well-known gunpowder explosions and large-scale installations are full of life and explosive energy — they surpass the two-dimensional and move freely from indoor spaces to the society and nature outside.

Over the past thirty years, Cai's art has left its mark in various cultural spheres across five continents. Cai was also the curator of the first China Pavilion at the 51st Venice Biennale (2005) and has served as Director of Visual and Special Effects for the Opening and Closing Ceremonies of the 2008 Olympics in Beijing. His notable projects in recent years include: solo exhibitions Saraab at Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art in Doha, Qatar (2011), and 1040M Underground in Donetsk, Ukraine (2011); explosion events One Night Stand (Aventure d'un Soir) above the river Seine, Paris (2013), and Sky Ladder by a fishing village in Quanzhou, China (2015). In 2016, he curated What About the Art? Contemporary Art from China in Doha, Qatar (2016).

Cai was awarded the Golden Lion at the 48th Venice Biennale (1999), and the Praemium Imperiale in the painting category (2012). He was among the five artists honoured with the first U.S. Department of State Medal of Arts award in 2012. He has recently been awarded the Barnett and Annalee Newman Foundation Award in 2015, and the Bonnefanten Award for Contemporary Art (BACA) and the Asia Arts Award in 2016.

Publication

Cai Guo-Qiang: My Stories of Painting will be accompanied by a publication of the same title, available in both English and Dutch. It will include writings by Cai Guo-Qiang, Bonnefantenmuseum director Stijn Huijts, as well as the former director of Hong Kong's M+ museum, Lars Nittve and is published by Walther König Publisher.

Bonnefanten Award for Contemporary Art (BACA) 2016

In presenting the exhibition and publication by BACA laureate Cai Guo-Qiang, the Bonnefantenmuseum is once again drawing attention to an exceptional and influential oeuvre within contemporary art and introducing the public to a relevant, yet for many people an unfamiliar chapter of art history. Cai Guo-Qiang was awarded the BACA 2016 by a unanimous vote. The international selection committee for 2016 comprised of Cao Fei (artist), Stijn Huijts (Bonnefantenmuseum director), William Lim (architect, collector), Carol Lu (curator, writer), Lars Nittve (former director M+ Museum Hong Kong) and Uli Sigg (collector).

Previous winners of the BACA are Eija-Liisa Ahtila (2000), Neo Rauch (2002), Pawel Althamer (2004), Bethan Huws (2006), John Baldessari (2008), Francis Alys (2010), Mary Heilmann (2012) and Laura Lima (2014).

Support

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Images

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Cai Guo-Qiang with Ascending
2, Japan, 1989, courtesy of C
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Cai Guo-Qiang, Seasons of Life
© Cai Guo-Qiang; Courtesy of
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Cai Guo-Qiang, Poppy Series
Courtesy of Cai Studio Photo L



with the whole family, in prep
house for his afterlife
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Cai Ruiqin, Matchbox Drawing
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